

# Effective Management of Federal Grant Dollars: Council On Financial Assistance Reform (COFAR) Priorities for FY13-15

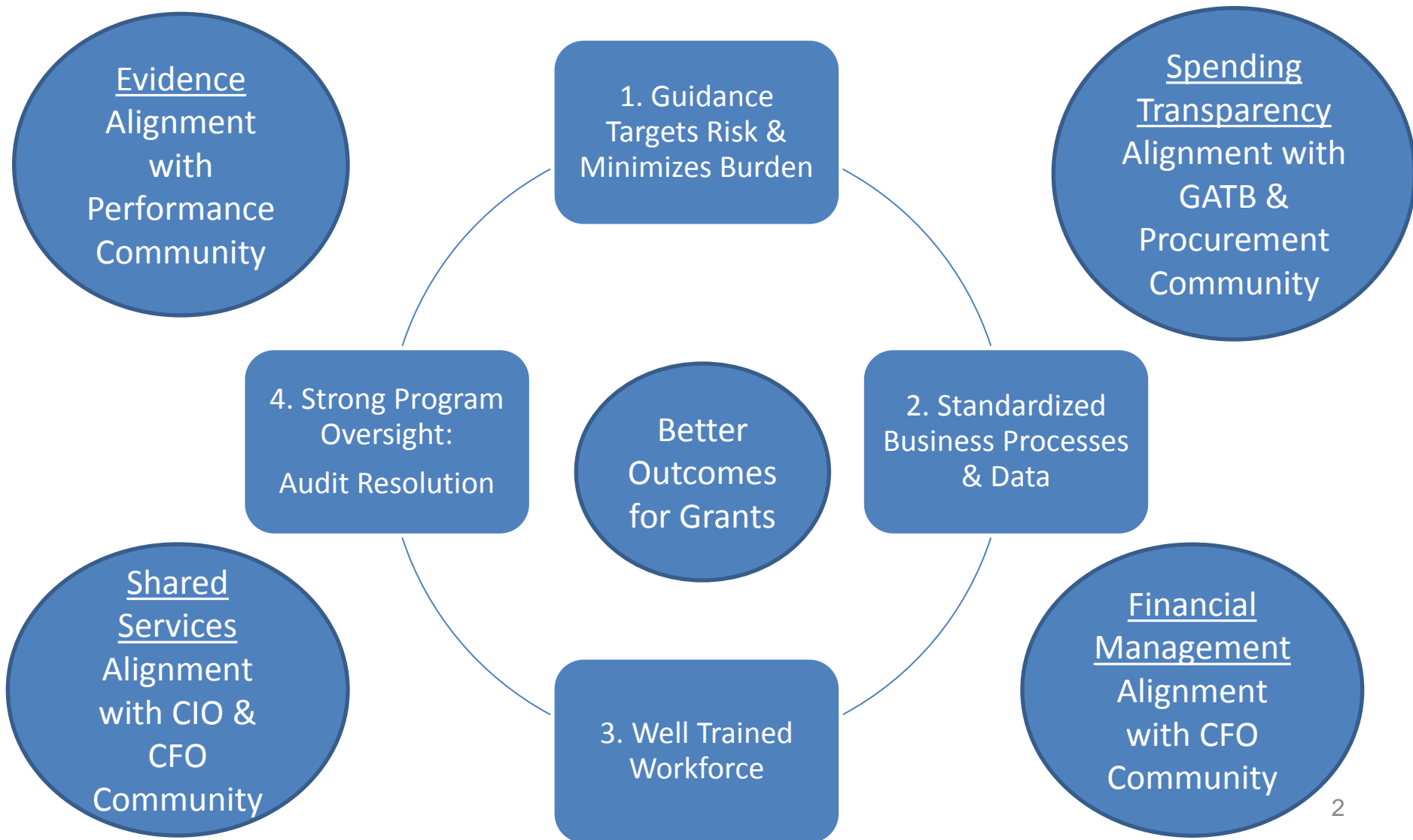
COFAR Principals  
December 4, 2013

*The Council on Financial Assistance Reform was established in 2011 as a governance body to provide policy level leadership for the Federal grants community. For more information please visit [cfo.gov/cofar](http://cfo.gov/cofar).*

# COFAR Priorities:

## Strong Controls Yield Better Outcomes

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# Framework for 2014 COFAR Activities

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**All deliverables will be strategically aligned to support effective implementation of guidance reform with minimum resource burden to Federal agencies and non-Federal entities.**

# Strong Program Oversight: Audit Resolution

## Challenge

- Over 4,000 audited programs failed to receive clean opinions in 2011 (3% of total audited programs)
- No existing guidance holds agencies and recipients accountable for effectively correcting financial integrity weaknesses

## Accomplishments

- September 2013: High risk programs and recipients identified
- November 2013: CAROI pilot results presented to COFAR principals

# Strong Program Oversight: Audit Resolution

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## Short Term Deliverables

- December 2013: Document best practices on CAROI to contribute to resource repository
- February 2014: Complete framework for 2014 Compliance Supplement (w/preview of guidance implementation)
- March 2014: Compile and publish Federal agencies' audit resolution policies
- March 2014: Finalize Single Audit Metrics
- April 2014: Publish 2014 Compliance Supplement
- June 2014: FAC to deliver available standard and ad hoc reports and analytical tools

## Long Term Deliverables

- July 2014: Reconvene to plan management decision letter pilot
- December 2014: Publish proposal to revise Data Collection Form and SEFA

# Workforce Development

## Challenge

- Lack of consistent standards for qualifying people to perform the grants management function
- No government-wide core training required of people performing the grants management function

## Accomplishments

- December 2013: Competencies established
- December 2013: Resource repository built, available for use, and in test phase

# Workforce Development

## Short Term Deliverables

- June 2014: Refine governance and content of resource repository
- June 2014: Publish Grants 101 Course

## Long Term Deliverables

- July 2014: Reconvene to discuss possible industry-wide credential framework or other long term vision

# Grants Data Standardization

## Challenges

- Over 700 distinct grant related forms approved in OMB database
- No current process to vet and validate existing data elements nor to create and validate new data elements
- Multiple stakeholders must be engaged to fully explore grants data standards and chart a successful path forward
- Non-standard data definitions compromise quality of publicly reported financial data

## Accomplishments

- September 2013: Preliminary analysis of 1100 data elements
- September 2013: Contract awarded to support further analysis of data elements and development of governance framework
- December 2013: 99 standard definitions in final guidance

# Grants Data Standardization

## Short Term Deliverables

- December 2013: Grants data standardization proposed vision, project outline, and governance framework
- March 2014: HHS to brief COFAR on grants data standards records repository functional requirements

## Long Term Deliverables

- June 2014: Brief COFAR on proof of concept for grants data standards
- July 2014: Reconvene to plan additional long term deliverables based on HHS and Treasury short term deliverables.

# Risk-Based Guidance Targets Burden and Waste, Fraud & Abuse

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## Challenge

- 8 Different circulars provide duplicative and conflicting guidance
- Compliance requirements add burden without contributing to performance or reducing the risk of waste, fraud, & abuse

## Accomplishments

- February 2012 – Advance Notice of Proposed Guidance
- February 2013- Notice of Proposed Guidance
- December 2013 – Final Guidance & Rollout Webcast

# Risk-Based Guidance Targets Burden and Waste, Fraud & Abuse

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## Short Term Deliverables

- January 2014: Training webcast conducted
- March 2014: Establish metrics for guidance
- June 2014: Federal agencies submit draft regulations to OMB
- June 2014: Additional training webcasts planned/conducted as needed

## Long Term Deliverables

- December 2014: Final guidance effective
- December 2014: Baseline metrics collected
- December 2014: Case studies of evidence/risk best practices

# Timeline COFAR Deliverables

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**December 2013:** Final guidance published, resource repository of crosswalks, side-by-sides, CAROI best practices & webcast

**June 2014:** Agencies submit draft rules to OMB, robust resource repository & Grants 101 Course available, Data Standards Repository

**January-March 2014:** Training webcasts, Single Audit & other Metrics, Compliance Supplement, Audit Resolution Policies, Provide feedback on Federal Spending Transparency improvement plans

**December 2014:** Final guidance effective, case studies in resource repository, consolidated DC Form and SEFA

# Engage With COFAR

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